

# AP<sup>®</sup> EUROPEAN HISTORY

## 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 3

Analyze the ways in which the development of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s both reflected and departed from the ideas of Marxism.

#### 9–8 Points

- Thesis is explicit and analyzes how the development of the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s reflected and departed from Marxist ideas.
- Organization is clear; develops Marxist ideas and Soviet policies pursued by Lenin and Stalin.
- Essay is well balanced; clearly connects Marxist ideas to Soviet policies.
- All major assertions are supported with specific references to Marxist ideas and Soviet policies.
- May contain errors that do not detract from the argument.

#### 7–6 Points

- Thesis is explicit and suggests how the development of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s reflected and departed from Marxist ideas.
- Organization is clear; identifies Marxist ideas and Soviet policies pursued by Lenin and/or Stalin.
- Essay is balanced; deals with Marxist ideas and Soviet policies at least briefly.
- All major assertions are supported by some evidence concerning Marxist ideas and Soviet policies.
- May contain an error that detracts from the argument.

#### 5–4 Points

- Thesis is limited; may deal thinly with how the development of the Soviet Union reflected and/or departed from Marxist ideas.
- Organization is basic; may include simplistic references to Marxist ideas and Soviet policies.
- Essay shows imbalance; limited references to Marxist ideas **and** Soviet policies.
- Some of the major assertions are supported by references to Marxist ideas and Soviet policies.
- May contain a few errors that detract from the argument.

#### 3–2 Points

- No explicit thesis or a thesis that merely repeats/paraphrases the prompt.
- Organization is ineffective.
- Essay shows serious imbalance; Marxist ideas **or** Soviet policies may be omitted.
- Little relevant evidence; may appear disorganized.
- May contain several errors that detract from the argument.

#### 1–0 Points

- No discernible attempt at a thesis/off task.
- No discernible organization.
- Marxist ideas and Soviet policies are neglected.
- Minimal or no supporting evidence is used.
- May contain numerous errors that detract from the argument.

Despite its inspiration taken from Karl Marx's <sup>and Engel's</sup> ideas of Communism, the Bolshevik led revolution of Russia and development of the USSR took ~~a turn~~ for an autocratic turn as war, ideological differences, and the desire for power led to a Leninism-Stalinism reminiscent of the severe, exploitative Tsarist regime, ~~leading to police~~. As a result, the Soviet Union's development prior to World War Two ~~was~~ was led by brutal and pragmatic policies ~~guided~~ only guided by Communism in name.

Though Marx had expected the ascendancy of ~~foreign~~ global Communism to be led by the workers (particularly in Germany), Vladimir I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky organized Soviets and the disciplined Bolshevik party to lead peasants and workers into a centralized, state-run Communism in Russia. Lenin returned from exile in Switzerland with the help of Germans who hoped to undermine Russia's government during World War I, and ~~this~~ <sup>the</sup> practical party he organized overthrew the Tsar and ~~a very broad~~ resisted a very broad attack during the Russian Civil War. <sup>Directly</sup> After the Civil War, Soviet policy kept some of Marx's ideals: women were given broader freedoms in government office positions and control of their families (though these freedoms were gradually curtailed); businesses and infrastructure were largely owned by the state, following Marx's prediction that the state would usher in a democracy where all means of production were owned by all people and workers; the privileges of the church and the boyar nobility were ~~comp~~ completely eliminated; nations outside of Russia proper were integrated into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in the hope of spreading Communism worldwide; and Lenin organized the Third ~~form~~ International, succeeding those led by Marx, <sup>himself</sup> to command Communist parties across the globe. Lenin, however, began to retreat from total Marxism further, with the

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New Economic Policy, which allowed private ownership of smaller businesses.

After Lenin's death in 1924, Josef Stalin's USSR saw the greatest departure from Marx's ideal of a society ~~to~~ run for and by the workers. Stalin rejected the ideals of the founders of the Revolution in favor of maintaining his own unchallenged leadership of the nation. He "purged" the nation of all so-called dissidents, totalling more than 1 million people, and comprising of the vast majority of Bolshevik leaders. Stalin's use of Marxism was almost entirely superficial, claiming that the victims of his purge ~~were~~ deserved their execution because they were "enemies of the people," proved with ~~the~~ rigged show-trials that forced the defendants to give false confessions. His "cult of personality" was his. This way, Stalin returned the new country to an even more extreme version of Russia's overthrown autocracy, in which ~~Stalin~~ he was the only person in the nation safe from his quest for power and paranoia. Thus, Marxist ideology and whether one agreed with it was Stalin's least concern, ~~seen~~

The Soviet Union industrialized at a miraculous pace during Stalin's reign, returning to and far surpassing economic prewar economic levels to become the world's second largest economy, ~~and~~ <sup>at</sup> a great social cost. Since the nation had few allies, capital for industrialization came from exploitation of the workers, who were worked often to death in exchange for barely enough food to survive. Stalin's Five Year Plans did practice some Marxist-inspired policies, by seeking to remove the relatively well-off Kulak class (eliminating class struggle, though Stalin himself used the kulak's only as a scapegoat for economic problems) and collectivizing agriculture; however, collectivization became a violent process that left farmers with few resources and few opportunities. Ironically, ~~many~~ the majority of Russian citizens became workers to fuel the exploitative, urban

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industrialization that Marx so despised ~~of~~, but a final slap to the face for Marx was Stalin's determination to maintain "socialism in one country" and reject attempts to globalize the system.

~~Under~~ With only the guidance of an untried, utopian ideal and the repressive, opportunistic regimes that preceded it, the leadership of the Soviet Union was unable to <sup>promise</sup> fulfill the peace, equal prosperity, and social harmony that Marxism hoped for, in reaction against a hostile capitalist economy just as brutal.

In 1921, the political group known as the Bolsheviks defeated the last group challenging their control of Russia, and subsequently sought to stage a revolution in Russia based on Communism as described by Karl Marx. The leader of the revolution, Vladimir Lenin, sought to institute Marx's ideas of the elimination of ~~the~~ <sup>proletariat</sup> struggle under the capitalism of the industry-owning bourgeoisie to a certain extent. The first two <sup>primary</sup> leaders of the Soviet Union, Lenin and Joseph Stalin, implemented policies that both reflected and departed from the ideas of Marxism that included a classless society in which all aspects of capitalism had been eliminated. This can be seen through Lenin's belief in the vanguard of the party and New Economic Policy and through Stalin's Five-Year Plans and the collectivization of agriculture.

In the 1920's, the Soviet Union was emerging from the phase in which it gained control of Russia after battling rebel groups, and was seeking to solidify its governmental structure and economy. Marxist ideas call for the proletariat social class to stage the revolution that institutes a classless society and carries out the destruction of the bourgeoisie. Lenin departed from this idea

through his belief in the vanguard of the party. He believed that because Russian society is composed of mostly peasants, the lower class was not capable in staging the Marxist revolution.

For this reason, the Soviet government formed in the 1920's was the Communist Party ~~composed~~ of not proletarian lower classmen, but of intellectuals such as Lenin himself and Leon Trotsky, who were educated members of the party elite. Additionally, Marxism called for a society in which ~~no~~ private property and ownership did not exist as part of the classless society. Lenin's New Economic Policy departed from this by allowing small-scale private ownership of land parcels by farmers who were growing crops. This policy also allowed farmers to sell small crops based on subsistence agriculture at their own prices and for their own profit. ~~These~~ These beliefs and policies portray how under Lenin, the Soviet Union departed from the ideas of Marxism to an extent.

In contrast, under Joseph Stalin in the 1930's, policies were instituted in the development of the Soviet Union that reflected Marxism. Stalin instituted the Five Year plans, which called

for the creation of heavy industry and demanded agricultural workers to move to cities in order to work in factories that sought to increase the Soviet Union's industrial capacity. These plans reflected Marxist ideas because they installed a command economy in which workers did not produce profit for themselves, as in capitalism, but for the state. It also placed workers at the same class level because since they were not earning their own profit based on selling goods, they could only earn the same amount of money paid to them by the government. Part of Stalin's economic policy at this time was the collectivization of agriculture. This called for former privately-owned farms to be combined into larger state-owned farms in which a designated number of farmers worked. This reflected Marxism because it was a policy that eliminated any form of private ownership. Through the belief of the vanguard party and the policies of the New Economic Policy, the Five Year Plans, and the Collectivization of agriculture, decisions of Lenin and Stalin showed how the development of the Soviet Union both reflected and departed from Marxism.

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During the rise of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 30's, the ideas of Marxism were both reflected and departed from in some cases, Capitalism was abolished and a Communist Regime was erected. However, with things such as the Five years plan, and the NEP, liberal ideas were flirted with.

The ways the Marxism was reflected in the Soviet Union were, abolishment of Capitalism and rise of Communism. During the years following the civil war, the Communist party took control of the government. Under Stalin, the process of consolidating the agricultural lands took place. This included the liquidation of kulaks who were property owning peasants. During this time, ~~the proletariat was created under~~ the Dictator of the proletariat was in control, which Marx had said was needed to create a Communist State.

The ways in which the Soviet Union departed from the ideas of Marxism outnumber the amount in which they are reflected. Take the Five years plan, this set about heavily increasing industrialization. ~~Although this~~ This led to the proletariat being poorly



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mistreated and ~~was~~ in a worse position than before. With that being said, the Soviet's system reflected the ideas of Capitalism more than those of Marx himself. The New Economic Policy was also a big depart from Marxism in the Soviet Union. This allowed for some limited, but existing economic growth involving capitalist trade. The Soviet Union had put on the robes of the tyrant and Communism was no more of a system that was militaristic, industrial and poverty stricken. It varied greatly from Marx's idea of a classless utopia because not only was there the Soviet Union a totalitarian state with little rights, there was also a party elite. A small group of people at the top while the rest of the country was poor.

With the rise of the Soviet Union during the 1920's and 30's some of Marx's ideas were reflected. However as the Soviet Union needed to expand it turned to industrialization and capitalism to grow the Marxist "Frankenstein" that it had become.

# AP<sup>®</sup> EUROPEAN HISTORY 2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Question 3

### Overview

This question asked students to analyze ways in which the development of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s reflected the ideas of Marx or departed from them. In order to respond effectively students had to be able to identify some of Marx's ideas (for example, class struggle, nationalized industry, planned economy, collective ownership, atheism, abolition of inheritance, international revolution, women's rights, proletarian revolution after bourgeois revolution, evils of capitalism, egalitarianism) and show how Soviet policies reflected those ideas or departed from them. Students could not simply say that Marx was for equality, or for the working class.

### Sample: 3A

**Score: 9**

The thesis is sophisticated and shows a clear understanding of Marxist ideas and Soviet reality. The organization is effective; it features a chronological treatment of Lenin and Stalin. The essay cites the Third International and freedom for women as reflecting Marxist ideas, and it identifies the transition to NEP as a departure from Marxist ideas. The essay further states that Stalin acted against Marxist principles in his purges and suggests that Stalin's attachment to Marxist ideas was superficial. The essay identifies the pace of industrialization under the Five-year Plans and elimination of kulaks as inspired by, but moving beyond, Marxist ideas. The student shows command of the topic and masterfully links Marxist ideas and Soviet policies.

### Sample: 3B

**Score: 8**

The thesis is clear and includes both reflections of and departures from specifically identified Marxist ideas (reflected and departed are treated together). The organization is clear in identifying Marxist ideas and their connections to the policies of Lenin and Stalin. The analysis of Lenin specifies "vanguard of the party" as substituting for proletariat and NEP as departing from Marxist ideas. The analysis of the connection between Stalin's Five-year Plans and Marxist ideas of eliminating private property is strong and uses ample details. Why is this not a 7? Both Marxist ideas and Soviet policies are developed fluently. Why is this not a 9? The analysis in the thesis doesn't distinguish between the reflections and departures quite as clearly as it could.

### Sample: 3C

**Score: 6**

The thesis is explicit, suggesting the abolition of capitalism went along with Marxist ideas. The organization is clear, focusing on policies that reflected Marxist ideas: consolidation of agricultural lands and liquidation of kulaks and dictatorship of the proletariat, then on departures from Marxist ideas, citing Five-year Plans. Multiple pieces of evidence support each assertion (reference to collectivization, kulaks, limited capitalism under NEP). Why is this not a 5? The evidence on Soviet policies is specific and the argument is clear. "It [USSR] varied greatly from Marx's idea of a classless utopia because not only was the Soviet Union a totalitarian state with little rights, there was also a party elite." Why is this not a 7? The Five-year Plans are not accurately linked to Marxist ideas, and Marxist ideas aren't fully spelled out throughout the essay.